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THE CHRISTIAN DISCIPLE INTRODUCED.

JOSHUA XXII. 10, 11, 12.

“AND when they came unto the borders of Jordan, that are in the land of Canaan, the children of Reuben, and the children of Gad, and the half tribe of Manasseh, built there an altar by Jordan, a great altar to see to.

“And the children of Israel heard-say, Behold the children of Reuben, and the children of Gad, and the half tribe of Manasseh have built an altar over against the land of Canaan, in the borders of Jordan, at the passage of the children of Israel.

“And when the children of Israel heard of it, the whole congregation of Israel gathered themselves together at Shiloh, to go up to war against them.”

Thus by a mere *hear-say* nine and a half of the tribes of Israel were agitated, put in motion, and gathered together to go to war against their unoffending brethren. They “*heard-say*,” that their brethren had set up an altar; and so much was true; but this might be without any criminal intention; yea, from the most pious motives. But the *hear-say* excited a jealousy, that the new altar had been erected in rebell-

ion against the Lord. One stirred up another; the fire of jealousy spread like lightning through the tribes; and prior to making any proper inquiry, as to the motives of their brethren, a vast army was assembled to go to war. But God suffered them not to commence the expected slaughter. Phinehas, the son of Eleazar the priest, and ten princes, were sent to expostulate with the supposed rebels, to bring them to a sense of the evil they had done. They went with full confidence, that their brethren had committed a great trespass against the Lord. Nor does it appear that it had occurred to their minds, that possibly the error was on their own part; for, instead of making a friendly inquiry, they introduced their business by an implicit charge of rebellion. As ambassadors of a numerous people, they opened their embassy in this manner—“Thus saith the whole congregation of the Lord, what trespass is this, that ye have committed against the God of Israel, to turn away this day from following the Lord?” And as though this were not enough to say prior to inquiry, they proceeded—“Is

the iniquity of Peor too little for us, from which we are not cleansed until this day (although there was a plague in the congregation of the Lord) but that ye must turn away this day from following the Lord? And it will be, seeing ye rebel today against the Lord, that tomorrow he will be wroth with the whole congregation of Israel."

Phinehas was probably the chief speaker on this occasion; but he spake in behalf of the ten princes, and of the tribes they represented. After hearing such a confident charge, and solemn expostulation, from so good a man as Phinehas, who would imagine that it was still possible, that the accused brethren were innocent of the crime alleged against them? But before we approve the conduct of the accuser, let us hear the reply of the accused.

"Then the children of Reuben, and the children of Gad, and the half tribe of Manasseh, answered and said to the heads of the thousands of Israel—The Lord God of gods, the Lord God of gods, he knoweth, and Israel he shall know; if it be in rebellion, or if in transgression against the Lord, (save us not this day) that we have built us an altar to turn from following the Lord, or if to offer thereon burnt-offering, or meat-offering, or to offer peace-offerings thereon, let the Lord himself require it: And if we have not rather done it, for fear of this thing, saying, In time to come your children might speak to our children, saying, What have ye to do with the Lord God of Israel? For the Lord hath made Jordan a border between us and

you;—ye children of Reuben and children of Gad, ye have no part in the Lord: so shall your children make our children cease from fearing the Lord. Therefore, we said, let us now prepare to build us an altar, not for burnt-offering, nor for sacrifice; but that it may be a witness between us and you, and our generations after us, that we might do the service of the Lord—that your children may not say to our children in time to come, Ye have no part in the Lord."

Thus the accused brethren vindicated themselves in respect to the charge of rebellion against the Lord, and against the other tribes. So far had it been from their hearts to rebel in building the altar, that they had done this thing from attachment to the worship which God had instituted, and from a desire that the connexion, which had existed between them and their brethren, might be perpetuated from generation to generation.

Although we cannot but disapprove the rashness of Phinehas and the ten princes, in accusing their brethren of rebellion against the Lord, yet we cannot but be pleased with their candor in hearing the reply of the accused. The candor, with which they heard, may justly be inferred from the happy effect, which the explanation had on their own minds. "When Phinehas the priest, and the princes of the congregation, and heads of the thousands of Israel, which were with him, heard the words that the children of Reuben, and the children of Gad, and the children of Manasseh spake, it pleased them. And

Phinehas, the son of Eleazar the priest, said to the" accused brethren, "This day we perceive, that the Lord is among us, because ye have not committed this trespass against the Lord: Now ye have delivered the children of Israel out of the hand of the Lord." Thus Phinehas, with becoming frankness and candor, expressed his entire satisfaction in that conduct of his brethren, which, before the explanation, had appeared to him so criminal, as to be a just ground of war.

This portion of sacred history contains important lessons of instruction and admonition. In the first place, we may see the importance of inquiry respecting the motives, by which our fellow-men are governed, before we censure their conduct. It would have been much to the credit of Phinehas and the ten princes, had they suspended their accusations, until a fair and friendly inquiry could have been made respecting the design of their brethren in erecting the altar. Such a candid course of proceeding would have saved a great expense and a great disturbance. It would also have saved these ambassadors from the mortification they felt, in reflecting on the folly and impropriety of their conduct in judging a matter before they heard it. As good men, they must have been pleased on finding, that they had no ground of complaint against their brethren; but it would have added to their happiness, if, on reflection, they had found as little ground of complaint against themselves.

In the second place, we may observe, from the example of

Phinehas, that even good men are liable to be unduly influenced by hear-says, to indulge unreasonable jealousies, and to judge and censure too precipitately. But these are faults against which we cannot guard with too much care. From these faults originate a great part of the contentions which exist in society. It is believed, that nine tenths of all the difficulties and alienations, which have taken place among christians, would have been prevented, had there been due care in these particulars. And in ten thousand instances their hasty censures one of another have been as groundless as were the accusations brought against those who set up the altar of witness. Nor are men always so prudent and candid as Phinehas and the princes were on that occasion. Too often it has been the case, that, after men have rashly accused others of great crimes, they have not had candor enough to hear what the accused might say in their own defence. However, for the honor of religion, we feel bound to say, that darkness is not more opposed to light than such conduct is to the spirit of christianity. A willingness to see and to confess our faults is essential to the christian temper.

In the third place, we should remark, that although good men of ancient times had their failings, yet these are not recorded for our *imitation*, but for our *admonition*. By carefully observing the things in which they failed, we should be put on our guard, lest we imitate the worst part of their characters. We

may admit, that the zeal of Phinehas was the occasion of his imprudences; but we must also admit, that in those instances of imprudence, his zeal was not according to knowledge, or charity. It is probable, that many men make their zeal in a supposed good cause an excuse for their rashness in condemning others. But we ought to remember, that the second commandment is like the first; that no part of our conduct is more pleasing to God, than that in which we do unto others, as we would that they should do unto us; and, that rash and censorious judging is as strictly forbidden, as idolatry or blasphemy. It will be in vain for us to plead our love to God, as an apology for hating our brethren; and as much in vain to pretend that love to the souls of men, to truth, or to the welfare of Christ's kingdom, led us to treat our fellow-creatures unkindly. True christian zeal is but the fervor of christian love; and the more we possess of this, the more careful we shall be "to do justly, to love mercy, and to walk humbly with God;" the more we shall exercise a godly jealousy in respect to ourselves, and the more candor we shall feel towards others.

Within a few weeks, many of the several tribes of professed christians in New England, have "heard-say," that a new ALTAR, or a new *periodical work*, was about to be set up in the vicinity of Boston. What feelings, or what jealousies, this hear-say has excited, we know not; and we feel happy in not knowing, that our motives have been rashly condemned. But, if any of our

brethren have so far indulged jealousy, as to accuse us of erecting this altar in rebellion against the Lord, or with a desire to effect a schism among the tribes of Israel, we hope they will imitate another part of the conduct of Phinehas, by candidly hearing our explanation and defence.

If we have not misapprehended our own motives, we may humbly say, "The Lord God of gods knoweth," and our brethren *will know*, that we have no wish to withdraw ourselves from the worship of the God of Israel, or to establish, or promote, a party interest in opposition, or even in contradistinction, to the common interest of all the friends of christianity. Our altar is intended as an altar of witness and not of rebellion. By this we mean to witness before the world, our love to God, his word, and his worship; our love to the Lord Jesus, and his institutions; our love to our fellow christians of different denominations; our concern for those of our fellow men who are in a state of alienation from God; our desires for the prosperity of Christ's kingdom, and for the peace and welfare of society.

With deep regret and concern, we have witnessed an increase of a spirit of bitterness and alienation in our land, and even among those who profess to be the disciples of Jesus. We mean, that our altar shall be a witness for us, that we cordially disapprove such a spirit; and, that it is our aim to cultivate in ourselves, and in others, the mild, candid, benevolent, and forgiving temper recommended by the precepts and the example of the Prince of life.

While we may bear testimony against what shall appear to us erroneous in opinion, in temper, and in practice, we hope not to forget our own liability to err, and our need of the candor of others. In expressing our opinions of the doctrines and the duties of christianity, we shall aim to make the Bible our standard, and not "teach for doctrines," or for duties, "the commandments of men." As the field of religious knowledge is boundless, and as all our forefathers have been liable to err, we shall cherish the spirit of humble and free inquiry, and disapprove the spirit of bigotry and intolerance. Neither the *antiquity*, nor the *novelty* of any opinion will be admitted by us, as any certain evidence of its *truth* or its *incorrectness*. Error, as well as truth, may be old and grey-headed, and may have had the sanction of great, learned, and even good men, for many centuries. And we have no fear, that christianity will suffer by the severest scrutiny, or the most thorough investigation. Yea, should such a scrutiny even undermine some of our own present opinions, we may have the happiness of exchanging darkness for light, and dross for gold. In such a case, nothing would be lost which we wish to retain.

Believing that it was the great object of our Saviour's mission, to bring "life and immortality to light," and "to redeem to himself a peculiar people, zealous of good works," a people to be distinguished as his friends by their "love one to another," these things will be kept in view as of the first importance. Therefore,

the friends of Christ of every denomination may expect, that in this work, they will be treated with candor; and that no attempts will be made by us, to destroy their characters, or abate their usefulness. If they differ from us in opinion, we hope to remember, that we differ as much from them; and, that God hath committed all judgment to his Son, and not to us. The rights, which we shall claim for ourselves, we shall allow to others. And the right of private judgment in matters of faith is a right, which we shall not *surrender* in respect to ourselves, nor *deny* in respect to those who may dissent from our opinions.

It is our settled opinion, that christianity will never appear to the best advantage, until its professors shall be brought to *believe*, and to *feel*, that "LOVE is the fulfilling of the law," and that without love they are nothing, as to the approbation of God. So far as a belief in unintelligible doctrines of human invention shall be regarded as the grand criterion of the christian character, or as essential to it, so far we may expect that bitter animosities will be the disgrace of professed christians; and so far professors will treat the apostle's exhortation with contempt, or disregard,—"Put on, therefore, as the elect of God, holy and beloved, bowels of mercies, kindness, humbleness of mind, meekness, long suffering: forbearing one another, forgiving one another. If any man have a quarrel against any, even as Christ forgave you, so also, do ye. And above all things put on charity, which is the bond

of perfectness ; and let the peace of God rule in your hearts, to the which also ye are called, and be ye thankful." But, if professors of religion can be brought to a cordial compliance with this exhortation, they will then shine as lights in the world, and others seeing their good works will glorify our Father who is in heaven.

While we implore the divine blessing on our labors, may we not also affectionately invite all the friends of Christ, of every denomination, to become workers together with us. If there be any object of human pursuit, respecting which we might hope for the favor of God, and the co-operation of all *good people*, such we believe is the object of this work. Do professors of religion wish the conversion of the wicked, who are eye witnesses of their daily walk, or the conversion of the heathen in distant lands ? What course can they adopt, more direct and effectual, for the accomplishment of their wishes, than the one now proposed ? Is it not in vain for them to talk to their neighbours about the excellency of the christian religion, its tendency to unite men in one common interest, to subdue their lusts and pride, and to make them kind, humble, forbearing, and peaceable ; while there is to be seen, among professors themselves, so much of the genuine fruits of *party spirit*, bitterness, wrath, clamor, evil speaking one of another, envying and strife, &c. &c. ? The conversion of the heathen is indeed an important object. But to what do we wish to convert them ? To christianity ? or to a party interest, and

such a state of alienation among themselves, as actually exists among professors of religion in this land ? If in our attempts to propogate the gospel among the heathen, we could assure them, that in our own land it had produced among its professed friends love, joy, peace, long suffering, kindness, forbearance, and unity ; and set aside envying, strife, clamor, reviling, and censoriousness ; so that professors of religion can be distinguished from the world by their love one to another ; what a motive would this be to the heathen to listen to the instructions of the gospel ? But if our missionaries state to the heathen the *whole truth*, in respect to the manner in which professors of religion in this country treat one another, will not their hearers naturally infer, that the christian religion would be of little advantage to them, as to their peace and happiness in the present life ? Would they not be likely to say to us, *Physicians, heal yourselves ?* If your religion be *love*, why do you *hate* one another ?

From these reflections it appears, that to heal divisions, and to unite the friends of Christ, must be in effect to strengthen the cause of christianity. To aid us in this work, we cordially invite the ministers of the gospel, the editors and writers of theological works, and all the friends of the Lord Jesus. The cause is good, the field of labor is extensive, and there is ample employment for all who "pray for the peace of Jerusalem." And to all who cordially engage in this work, we may say, by way of encouragement, "Great is your reward in heaven."

Rev. A. Worcester

SKETCH OF THE CHARACTER OF THE REV. DR. ELIOT.

The following is an extract from a sermon, delivered at the Thursday lecture in Boston on the day of the interment of Dr. Eliot. Some of the friends, who knew him best, were of opinion, that the view here given of his character is true to nature; and at their request it is inserted in the Christian Disciple.

THERE are few cases, I believe, where our hope can be more full of assurance, than in that of the beloved and respected man, whose remains we are in a few hours to follow to the tomb and commit to its peaceful and sacred custody. I could wish, that the office of speaking of his character had fallen on one, more worthy of delineating it, as it merits to be drawn. Yet in truth it would be an offence against its singular and perfectly unaffected modesty, to attempt to adorn it by the pomp of splendid and formal eulogy. I am not willing therefore to suffer this occasion to escape, without at least a passing tribute of my affection and respect for a man, who was my father's friend, and, I may be permitted to say it, mine own friend.

Dr. Eliot was one of those men, who are and who deserve to be universally beloved for qualities, which, while they claim the truest respect, do not repulse the most familiar affection by their overpowering grandeur. The peculiar habits of his mind led him perhaps to delight more in inquiry and research, than in very abstruse and original thinking; rather to collect and treasure up what is already known, than to employ himself in arranging the

mass of knowledge or enlarging its limits by his own speculations. The extent of his reading on subjects connected with theology and general literature was not, I presume, surpassed by any among us. The strong power of his mind was memory; and he had collected and retained a great fund of curious and very uncommon learning, particularly on the history of the church and the history and biography of our own country. This knowledge, together with his knowledge of mankind—for without any ostentation he was a most acute and judicious observer of human character—made him an universally pleasing companion. There is no one, who ever knew him, who does not remember with complacency and affection the readiness and copiousness with which he communicated his knowledge; the vein of perfectly chaste and innocent pleasantry, which ran through his conversation; the essential good nature and sound judgment, which characterised his remarks; the occasional beams of fancy, which played over his thoughts; and the smile of most sweet and ineffable benevolence, the unclouded “sunshine of the soul,” which always lighted up his countenance.

But Dr. Eliot had higher qualities than these. He possessed all the elements of a thoroughly virtuous and christian character. His life was always governed by a predominant sense of duty to God. His heart was alive to all the charities of our nature. He had not a particle of envy or ma-

lignity, not a single drop of gall in his whole composition. His breast was a stranger to deceit; he was an Israelite indeed, in whom there was no guile. Though the gentler virtues were evidently most congenial to his disposition, yet, when the occasion required it, he did not fail to show, that he was not deficient in more energetic and commanding qualities of the mind. There was in him an uncommon healthiness and purity of principle, a singleness and openness of heart, an integrity which nothing could bend and nothing pervert; and to all his good qualities he united a transparent simplicity of character, which you might expect to find and could not fail to admire and love even in a child.

He filled up the duties of life with fidelity and honor. He was a tender husband, a most affectionate parent, and a true and steady friend. Our university never lost a sincerer advocate; the numerous literary and charitable societies, of which he was a member, a more faithful associate; and the cause of truth, and civil and religious freedom, a more conscientious and unfailing supporter.

As a minister of the gospel, his claims to respect were not few. In his theological opinions he was moderate and liberal—a temperate, yet not a timid critic—neither an enthusiast nor a latitudinarian—in short one of that class of christians, which, if not the most systematic and, if you please, philosophical in their theories, have yet probably kept the great practical and essential truths of christianity more steadily before

their eyes, than any religious denomination in christendom. In his official ministrations you all knew him; and if any should say, that there are others to whom Providence has entrusted greater gifts of eloquence and interest; yet, in the more private and perhaps more useful offices of a christian pastor—the tears of his congregation bear me witness when I say it—you will not easily find a more faithful, affectionate, and devoted servant of Christ.

How deeply and sincerely he was impressed with the truths of that religion, which he taught, no one, who knows the sublime composure, the unostentatious dignity, the perfect submission with which he met his last summons, will need to be assured. I can never forget the few moments, which, in the interval of his severe agony, I was permitted to pass with him—when I received the last affectionate pressure of his hand—when he faltered out his expressions of joy at my recovered health; his prayers for my future usefulness and fidelity; his acquiescence in the divine government in removing him from the world; his testimony that the views of the religion he had preached gave him consolation and support, even while the hand of death was pressing heavily upon him.*—In such a frame of

* “You know what my religious opinions have been,” said he. “They have been liberal, though not so liberal as those of some others. Such as they are, I have endeavoured to take them all from the Bible. Through life I have always valued every man, of whatever sentiments, according to his character. My views of religious truth give me support in this hour.” I

mind as this, did this truly good and venerable man wait the appointed time of his change. And I do not fear to say, that if he had done nothing else, as a minister, for the cause of religion than this—if he had left behind him no other memorial of his usefulness—the eloquence of such a death, the value of such an exemplification of the efficacy of religious impressions in giving serenity to the close of life and

shedding so divine a ray of consolation over the darkness of the tomb—this alone would be sufficient to vindicate his claims to a place among the powerful and persuasive preachers of the gospel.—He has gone to receive his reward:—"And I heard a voice, saying unto me, write: blessed are the dead which die in the Lord; for they rest from their labors, and their works do follow them."

Rev. S. B. Thatcher

AN ADDRESS TO CHRISTIANS ON FAMILY RELIGION.

It is not to be concealed, that the salutary discipline of domestic government, the great business of religious education, and, above all, the reasonable and interesting practice of family worship, have fallen into a degree of disuse, of which it is more easy to conjecture the extent, than to counteract the example—more easy to lament the symptoms, than to predict the consequences. This address is designed to awaken the attention of christians to this important subject.

Christians! The worship of God in your families is a *reasonable* service, and may be rendered a most *profitable* service. These are the two heads of our remarks.

First, then, it is a *reasonable* observed to him, that in moments of danger those points, on which Christians differed, seemed to lose their importance, and the mind rested on those great essential truths, on which all men agree. He assented to this with eagerness. He added after a pause—"I trust in the mercy of God, declared by Jesus Christ his Son." His extreme faintness made it necessary here to close the conversation.

service. If there be any who doubt this, their reasons are to me utterly beyond conjecture. It is not easy to imagine any reasons, which can be suggested in favor of public congregational worship, which are not equally strong in favor of the worship of families. The same God, whose providence governs communities, presides over the small circles of which communities are composed. It is he who setteth the solitary in families. It is he who has united them in ties more intimate, than any which can bind together the members of a large society.

Is it of any consequence, that the public should be impressed with reverence for God and his government? Surely then no practice can be indifferent, which will make those impressions early, stamp them deeply, and give ideas of religion an intimate association with the most tender, amiable, and lasting affections of the human heart.

It is not necessary to insist on the authority, which the head of a family possesses for this service, and which it is his duty to

exercise with fidelity and affection. However much the relaxation of the sentiments of religion, conspiring with other maxims of insubordination, may have enfeebled the authority of parents and masters in this age and under this government; the *obligation* of those, who are at the head of families, to provide for the religious wants of those, who depend on them for support, is still commensurate with the power—for it is the power which every where constitutes the obligation; and I shall refuse to believe that the power is extinct, till some serious attempt to revive and exercise it shall have failed. The father and the master may yet be the priest of his household.

But you ask, is it not enough that we observe our private devotions, in which we pray for our families, but must we also pray *with* them? I might reply by asking—is it enough that I give orders for the provision of the day, though I never take a repast with my family? Is it enough that I secretly wish my children should possess knowledge, which I take no care to communicate; or habits of which I set not the example; or principles which I take no pains to enforce? Unless it is first taken for granted that the practice which we recommend is either unnatural, unreasonable, or useless, no man, much less a christian, can have fulfilled his parental and domestic obligations, while he neglects to make an experiment at least of family worship?

Can any one imagine that topics will be wanting, while there

are so many subjects of family congratulation and thanksgiving—so many occasions for acknowledging domestic sins—so many family anxieties and afflictions, wants and mercies, hopes and fears? Is not every occasion, which you are still disposed to acknowledge in public by the notes which you send to be read in the sanctuary, an occasion for domestic gratitude, or supplication, or acknowledgment? Surely every truly devout sentiment, which you are ready to make the subject of public expression in the house of God, is worthy of being expressed on the spot where it was excited—in the circle where it is most intimately felt; and how many occasions are there, which it would be painful or improper to notice in any other place?

If we look back to the manners of the ancient world, and to the practice of the very heathens themselves, we shall find the rites of family religion every where prevailing. It was a dictate of nature to those Gentiles, who, having not the law of Moses or any express revelation, were a law unto themselves. Who can avoid discerning this fact in the frequent mention of the household gods of the Pagans? How touching that passage in the Roman poet, where the old Anchises is represented, escaping from the flames of Troy, and taking in his hand the images of his domestic deities?

The good old man with suppliant
hands implored

The gods' protection and their star-
adored:

Now, now, my son, no more delay.

I yield, I follow, where heaven shows
the way :
Keep, O my country gods ! our
dwelling place,
And guard this relique of the Tro-
jan race,
This tender child !——

What ! Shall the images of
the heathen world cry out against
us ; and the voice of nature be
preserved only in the fictions of
poetry and the records of idola-
try ? Shall the men of Troy rise
up in judgment against this gen-
eration, and condemn them ?

Our *second* assertion was, that
it is a *profitable* practice. If any
thing can effectually revive and
secure the fidelity of parents, the
affection of husbands and wives,
the moral restraint and early pi-
ety of children, the peace of do-
mestic life, the attachment of
servants, and the general order of
families, it must be the revival of
family religion. This must im-
pose a check on the impetuosity
of our passions, and give to the
conversation of the household a
sobriety and purity, which noth-
ing else can so effectually secure.
It is not easy to believe that pro-
faneness and riot should ever
find their way, much less take up
their abode, in a house where the
presence of God is every day ac-
knowledged, his protection sought,
his bounty acknowledged, his
pardon implored.

There is also another consider-
ation, which is by no means of
little moment. By the regular
reading of the scriptures in select
portions, as introductory to the
acts of family devotion, there is
given to the young a knowledge
of these sacred writings and a
reverence for them, which can be

in no other way so early and so
easily acquired. If it could for
a moment be supposed, that the
heads of families stood not in
need of this instruction, and that
they would derive from it no ad-
vantage, yet a pious and benevo-
lent regard to our children and
domestics ought to render us all
willing, punctual, and faithful in
the performance of a service,
which would produce the happi-
est and most lasting effects.

Yet there are those, who, in-
sensible to those moral and spir-
itual benefits, and looking only at
present and visible advantages,
ask, with a most deplorable un-
concern, what is the Almighty,
that we should serve him, and
what profit shall we have, if we
pray unto him ? If you think it
nothing then to have those about
you impressed with the fear of
God ; if you think it a poor con-
sideration to raise a seed to pre-
serve the sentiments of religion
and pure christianity for succeed-
ing generations ; if you think it
nothing, that those who leave
your families, to establish fami-
lies of their own, should carry
with them the spirit of prayer
and the faith of the gospel—at
least reflect on the influence which
the blessing of God thus faithfully
sought may have upon your own
industry and temporal circum-
stances ; and upon the happiness
of domestic life. The curse of
the Lord is in the habitation of
the wicked, but he blesseth the
habitation of the just.

You complain of the irregular-
ity and perversities of youth, that
you have lost the control of your
children, and that you cannot cor-
rect the evil habits which they

have early and unguardedly formed. Do not lament the wickedness of the times, and complain that your children are ruined; but think, what have you done for them? You have neglected to call into your aid, in the government of them, that most powerful of principles, the early fear of God. Could they fail to feel a powerful reverence for the name of God, if they had been daily witnesses of domestic worship? You are shocked with their profaneness—Think where they first learned it, and where they might first have been guarded against it. Do you complain of their ingratitude, their irreverence for your advice and correction? Ah! they have not been taught their duty to the Great First Parent! Do you complain of the negligence and unfaithfulness of servants? How should it be otherwise, when so little care is taken to sanction and enforce, with the sense of religion, the sentiment of fidelity? Where are the domestics who are accustomed to hear in the families in which they live these injunctions of the apostles?—"Servants, be obedient unto your masters in singleness of your heart, as unto Christ; not with eye-service, as men-pleasers, but as the servants of Christ, doing the will of God from the heart, with good will doing service as to the Lord, and not to men."

There is also another consideration, which powerfully enforces this most interesting duty; and this is—that it will prepare your children and domestics for the public services of the sanctuary. Little benefit comparative-

ly can be derived from the instruction, which is attempted to be conveyed from the pulpit, if some provision of religious rudiments and of serious impressions has not been made at home. They hear the preacher; but, without any thing to guide their thoughts, the services are to them a mere show, which engages their eyes, or sounds which strike their ears: If they have not been trained up in habits of devotion, accustomed to serious deportment at prayer, and instructed in the scriptures and the elements of christianity else where, can you expect them to enter with pleasure and interest into the service of the house of God?

I confess, when I look at the awful strides, which, from the circumstances in which we have been placed, vice, fraud, and general unprincipledness have made and will continue to make among us, my heart sometimes sinks within me. Where then, ye patriots, ye lovers of your country, who tremble for her safety—where can a check be placed to this increase of corruption, if it be not placed at home? The force of moral principle can never be preserved, if lost, or restored, but by the aid of religion; and if the little domestic societies, of which every community is composed, are not first well principled, the day of reformation is removed to an indefinite distance, and the day of evil is not far off. It is in your houses, and not in a larger association, that you can form nurseries of good men and good citizens. These are the fountains, into which the salt must be cast, or the streams, which

issue from them, will yet flow corrupting and corrupted, and every year will swell this dead sea with new pollution, till it spreads pestilence over our country, and overwhelms the city of our God.

Some, however, who do not feel for their country, may yet feel for themselves. To such I would say—religion is the great business of our lives, and these

lives are short and precarious. This is our day, in which we are exhorted to mind the things which belong to our peace, before they are hidden from our eyes forever. "The fear of God is the beginning of wisdom," and this fear will not cease to be our truest wisdom, when the maxims and the fashions of the present age shall have vanished like a dream.

By M.D. Rev. J. S. B.

ILLUSTRATIONS OF SCRIPTURE.

THE holy scriptures, in all which concerns our salvation, are sufficiently level with the understandings of men in general, so that no one who inquires with a humble, devout, and diligent mind, and faithfully follows the guidance of the light which God will give him, will be exposed to any errors, endangering his final and eternal interests. In our researches for divine truth, the grand inquiries therefore should be, have I the humble, devout, and diligent mind, which becomes a disciple of Christ? Am I sincerely disposed to receive the instruction which he communicates, and to bring my will, and affections, and conduct, into entire obedience to his commands?—"So seek, and you will find. So knock, and it will be opened to you."

But every one, who is accustomed to read the scriptures, is aware, that they contain names of sects and offices, of which it is desirable to know more, than the sacred writers have informed us;—that there are in them many references to sentiments and customs, which were perfectly in-

telligible in the times in which they were made, but are now necessarily obscure to those, who have no source of information concerning them, but the scriptures. The influence, which established sentiments and customs have upon modes of thought and of expression, is well known to those who have traced phraseologies and opinions to their sources; and it is universal. Indeed so many examples of this influence might easily be exposed in our common conversation, that no one who knows any thing of the nature of language, will for a moment consider the obscurity, which is occasioned by such references, as an objection to the scriptures. It would have required many volumes, in addition to the Bible, to have given such an account of every name, and such an illustration of every slight reference which it contains, as would have conveyed all the knowledge, which many readers in common life would gladly have possessed. But happily, we have volumes, which contain the information which we want; and

though they are not accessible to all christians, much labor is not demanded, either to acquire, or to communicate it.—Confining our attention, in these numbers, to the New Testament, we intend, under the title below, to give to our readers a series of these illustrations.

The object of these numbers is, first, to excite attention to the gospels; and second, to assist those who love the word of God, and are endeavouring better to understand it. We are persuaded that this department of our miscellany will be interesting to many, who read the New Testament with care and seriousness, but who have neither the leisure nor books, which are requisite, for a regular and minute investigation; and we cannot but hope that, by the momentary gratification of curiosity, which in some instances we may give to others, they may be induced to read the records of our religion, which they have neglected;—and that in the pursuit, to which they are thus prompted, of the most valuable knowledge, they may catch the spirit of their Master, and become in truth his disciples.

To each illustration, we shall attach the authorities from which we have derived it; and we shall follow the order of texts, as they are arranged by Lightfoot.

Illustrations of passages in the New Testament, which refer to climate, places, offices, sentiments, manners, and customs among the Jews in the time of our Saviour.

1.

Luke i. 15. "He shall be called

great in the sight of the Lord, *and shall drink neither wine nor strong drink*, and shall be filled with the Holy Ghost, even from his mother's womb."

The words which we have printed in italics indicate, that John was to be a Nazarite from his birth.—But what is a Nazarite?

The name was derived from the Hebrew verb *nazar*; that is, *he was separated*. It was first applied to Joseph, who was separated from his brethren; but though it had no such meaning in its application to him, it was afterwards used to imply a peculiar separation and devotedness to God; and on that account was applied to the Nazarites. A Nazarite was separated by a profession of holiness, beyond the common prescription of the law; and he who made this profession, and practised the purity to which it bound him, was ranked with the high priest, and was supposed to possess the highest sanctity of character. There were however two sorts of Nazarites. 1. Those, who in their infancy, or before their birth, were devoted to God by their parents. 2. Those who devoted themselves. The first were always Nazarites for life. The second, only for a limited time. The rabbies say, that the shortest term, for which this vow of separation could be made, was thirty days.

The Nazarites, who voluntarily separated themselves to God, when the days of their vow were fulfilled, shaved their heads at the door of the tabernacle of the congregation, and burnt their hair in the fire under the sacrifice of the peace offerings. Hence

probably, the Gentiles obtained the custom of sacrificing their hair to their gods; a custom which Lucian represents as common, and with which he himself complied. Suetonius says also, that Nero cut off his first beard, and put it into a golden box set with jewels, and consecrated it to Jupiter Capitolinus. Apollo is called in Homer "the nourisher of hair," and Æschylus speaks also of hair, which had been nourished and consecrated.

"The law of the Nazarites" may be read in the sixth chapter of Numbers. But a remarkable passage concerning this class of Jews occurs in the book of Amos. "I raised up of your sons for prophets," said God, "and of your young men for Nazarites. Is it not even thus, O children of Israel, saith the Lord? But ye gave the Nazarites *wine to drink*, and commanded the prophets, saying, prophesy not." [See chap. ii. 11, 12.] These expressions indicate, that the Nazarites enjoyed no small degree of the favor of God. The interdiction concerning *wine* was more strict upon them, even than upon the priests, for they were forbidden "to taste any thing that came of the vine tree, from the kernel, even to the husk." It was probably from this prohibition, that the Jewish doctors derive the opinion, which they assert without the least hesitation, that the vine was the tree in Paradise, by tasting the fruit of which Adam disobeyed and fell.

But three instances of Nazarites from their birth are named in the scriptures:—Sampson, Samuel, and John the Baptist.

The habit, worn by a Nazarite during his separation, was a garment of hair. Such an one was worn by John, and by Elijah before him; and Grotius thinks it not unworthy of remark, that he who came in the spirit and power of Elias, and who was called Elias by the prophets, should resemble his prototype in his dress.

So high was the estimation which the Jews had of those who were separated to God as Nazarites, that they were considered, says Maimonides, as possessing for the time the sanctity of the high priest; the purpose of their separation being, their closer attention to the study of the law and the other exercises of religion. In this sentiment of the Jews, we find perhaps the best illustration of the words of our Lord in Matthew xi. 18 and 19. "*John came neither eating nor drinking, and they say, he hath a devil. The Son of Man came eating and drinking, and they say, behold a man gluttonous, and a wine bibber; a friend of publicans and sinners.*" At least his reproach, in this application of it, has great force. In reference to their sentiments of the holiness of a Nazarite, he reminds them that John, the promised Elias, whom they had rejected, was a Nazarite from his birth. But to intimate at the same time the divine benignity of his own dispensation, and the greater freedom to which the gospel admitted its believers, he told them that the Son of Man came eating and drinking:—he ate and drank *with publicans and sinners*. [See Jennings's Jew. Antiq. v. i. p. 415.]

and seq. Lewis' Orig. Heb. B. 2. chap. xix. Lightfoot's Hor. Heb. in text. Grotius in Matth. iii. 4.]

2.

Matthew i. 18. "Mary was espoused to Joseph."

Before the giving of the law, says Maimonides, if a man and a woman agreed to marry, he introduced her into his house, and she became his wife:—but after the giving of the law, it was a precept in Israel, when a man would marry a woman, that he should receive her before witnesses, and afterwards that she should become his wife. This reception of a woman, with an intention and agreement of marrying her on a future day, was called an *espousal*; and not only was it customary, in many places, for a man to espouse a woman for a considerable time before he intended to marry her; but espousals even of their young children were not unfrequently made by parents. Lightfoot's Hor. Heb. in Matth. i. 18. and Calmet's Diet. on the word *marriage*.

3.

Luke i. 63. "He asked for a *writing table*."

Not for a "writing table," but for a *tablet*. The ancient tablets were made of wood, of brass, or of ivory. They were square, or oblong, with a hole either on one side, or at one end, by which they might be suspended against the side of a room. Children were taught to read and to write upon them; and they appear to have been used as registers of domestic expenses, &c. The sort of tablet, for which Zacharias asked, was made of pine, from which it derived its name, and was cov-

ered with wax, on which it was very easy to write. It is apparent therefore how easily he might be accommodated, when he asked for a *writing tablet*. [See Schleusner on the word, and Taylor's Fragments, 1st hundred, p. 128.]

4.

Luke ii. 7. "She brought forth her first-born son, and wrapped him in swaddling clothes, and laid him in a manger; because there was no room for them in the *inn*."

The place which is here called an *inn*, is called by travellers in the east, a "caravansary;" some of which are simply places of rest, (by the side of a fountain if possible;) and being at proper distances to accommodate travellers, are so named, though they be merely naked walls.—Others have an attendant, who is supported by the benevolence of passengers;—and others are more considerable establishments, where families reside, and where travellers may be supplied with provisions. Of this sort, without doubt, was that of Bethlehem.—Just behind these caravansaries, says Tavernier, are the stables, where the lodgings are many times as comfortable, as in the chambers of the house; and some, on account of their warmth, prefer them in winter.—The manager of the caravansary of Bethlehem was probably well known to the shepherds, and was therefore as accessible by night, as by day. [See Taylor's Frag. 1st hundred, p. 45. and 3d hundred, p. 160.]

5.

Luke ii. 8. "There were in the same country shepherds, *abid-*

ing in the field, watch over their flocks by night."

These were flocks of the desert, which were driven out for pasture about the time of the passover, which answers nearly to our March, and returned home at the first rains, which are said to begin on the third, or the seventh of the month Macheshvan, which corresponds to parts of our October and November. Even now, in the East, they drive their flocks into the deserts, or plain-fields, and there feed them through all the summer, watching them through the day and night. Our Lord was therefore probably born between the months of March and November.

If we consider what was the winter climate of Judea, it will appear still more improbable, that the birth of our Lord should have been on the 25th of December. "He giveth snow like wool," says the Psalmist; "He scattereth the hoar-frost like ashes; He casteth forth his ice like morsels; *who can stand before his cold.*"

Nor is it probable that Augustus would, at that season, have required all persons, women as well as men, to repair to their respective cities, to be taxed, or enrolled. That it was a time most inconvenient for travelling, may be inferred from the admo-

nition which our Lord gave to his disciples, in predicting the destruction of Jerusalem, and the sufferings of the Jews, "pray that your flight be not *in the winter.*" William of Tyre, in speaking of Saladines' troops, after their defeat in the neighbourhood of Ascalon, says, that they *sunk under the cold, and the tediousness of the ways, and were not only taken prisoners every day, but sometimes threw themselves in the way of their enemies, rather than perish with cold and want.* And one of the Jewish rabbies mentions it as an instance of the clemency of God, that the destruction of the first temple occurred in the summer, and not in the winter.

The question, what was the exact date of the birth of Christ, is indeed of little importance. There is however much more evidence that it was in the summer, or autumn, than in the winter. But one emotion of sincere love of his character, or one act of obedience to his will, will advance us farther in his favor, than the knowledge of all mysteries, while our hearts are unrenewed by his instructions. [Lightfoot's Hor: Heb: on the ver. and on Matth. xxiv. 20. Jennings's Jew. Antq. v. 2. p. 240. Harmer's Observ. v. 1. 21, 22.]

Rev. J. Buckerman.

ON HUMILITY IN THE INVESTIGATION OF CHRISTIAN TRUTH.

To obtain as clear conceptions as possible of the truth, which Jesus Christ brought from heaven, is one of the first duties of a Chris-

tian disciple. What teacher can be compared with Jesus? What an attestation did he receive from the infinite God, when there came

to him this voice from the excellent glory, "Thou art my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased?" Can we prize too highly a religion, which fell from the lips, and was sealed by the blood of the Son of God? Can we search for its truths with too earnest and assiduous attention?

There are several qualities or dispositions, which are necessary or important to the acquisition of Christian truth. To illustrate and recommend these, will be a leading object in the Christian Disciple. One of these dispositions is humility, an excellent virtue, which cannot too frequently or too seriously be enjoined, as a preservative from error, and a guide to truth. But perhaps the true nature of this virtue has not been sufficiently explained. Perhaps it has not been sufficiently distinguished from counterfeits. A timid and abject spirit, at once unfavorable to truth and degrading to the character, has often been recommended as humility, and been cherished as a virtue on account of the honorable name which it has borne. In the following dissertation, I wish to consider what is intended by that humility, which we ought to carry with us into our inquiries after religion. And for the sake of greater clearness, I will begin with pointing out what this humility does *not* imply.

1. To search for truth with christian humility does not imply, that we consider ourselves incapable of judging for ourselves, and that we resign our understanding to the guidance of others. This is a humility, which

aspiring and haughty men very naturally recommend, for it is the great foundation of spiritual dominion. But we ought to be just to ourselves and to the powers which God has given us. We ought to feel that we are rational and moral beings, bound to exert our faculties, and accountable for their improvement. We ought not indeed to overrate our capacities. We ought to see and to acknowledge the superiority of those who surpass us—But because our powers of mind are inferior to those with which others are gifted, are they unworthy of cultivation? Must we cease to exert them? Must we leave to others the task of thinking for us, and passively receive whatever they deliver as truth? Let us remember, that we are responsible only for the powers we possess, and that nothing is required of us, but to employ these with uprightness and assiduity. We are not expected to see as far as those who are blest with a more piercing vision; but as far as we *can* see, we are bound to look with our own eyes, and not to trust implicitly to the guidance of others.

There is one consideration, which should encourage common christians to examine the scriptures for themselves. The scriptures were designed for the great mass of mankind, and are in general adapted to their capacities. This we infer from the fact, that Jesus Christ addressed his instructions to the common people of a country, much less enlightened than our own. He did not repair to the schools of the learned, and entrust his truth to a few

exalted minds, to be dispensed by them, in the form which they should think best, to the inferior classes of society. His school was in the open air, in the streets, in the fields. His hearers were the poor and ignorant, as well as the rich and learned. Unto the poor was the gospel preached. Who then will say, that persons of ordinary understanding are incapable of attaining, by the honest exercise of their faculties, to a sufficient acquaintance with the instructions of Jesus, as they are preserved and transmitted in the sacred scriptures? Why must they yield their understandings to others?

If indeed we were assured, that any human being was infallible, we might safely commit to him the keeping of our consciences. But where is this privileged mortal, whose understanding is a region of unclouded light, a temple of truth too holy for the entrance of a single error? Who will dare, in so many words, to claim this exemption from human frailty?

Some indeed talk with great boldness of the perfect assurance which they have attained, as to the truth of the most disputed doctrines. But who are these bold and confident men? Are they distinguished by the patience of their inquiries, the calmness of their minds, the deliberateness of their judgments, the humility and meekness of their tempers? Or are they the precipitate, ardent, vain, and ignorant?

Some men are sure, that they are right on points where the wisest have doubted, because light has flashed upon their minds from heaven. They carry *within* them

an indescribable feeling, which assures them of the truth of their sentiments. They have received sudden, irresistible impressions, which are worth more than a thousand arguments. Are these the men we are prepared to follow?—Then there is no extravagance of sentiment or practice, which we must not embrace.—There is no absurdity of which some weak enthusiast has not felt the certainty.

Some men owe their confidence not so much to enthusiasm as to their ignorance. Perhaps nothing produces so much positiveness, as narrowness of views. No difficulties ever strike that mind, which looks only at one side of a question. No doubts disturb him, who will not inquire.

If then loud claims are not to be believed, how are we to choose the guide to whom we may resign our understanding? A thousand offer to conduct us to truth and heaven. Whom shall we follow? We must at least compare their different systems; and what is this but saying, that we must employ our own understandings on religion, that we must judge for ourselves?

Am I told by some of my readers, that they intend to take for their guides, not enthusiasts or the ignorant, but men of enlarged minds, more favored than themselves with the power and means of discovering truth? To this the answer is obvious:—If men of enlarged minds were united in their views of christian doctrines, the presumption would be strong in favor of their correctness. But who does not know, that on several subjects the

wise are divided—that every age has teemed with the controversies of the learned—that great names are ranged under very different standards—that every sect can number among its advocates profound reasoners and laborious inquirers. The fact is, that the most vigorous minds are accessible to error, that the wisest men cannot escape all the prejudices of education, all the biases to which they are exposed from their connexions and pursuits. Great men are often very weak. Some are blinded by attachment to old opinions, which they began to defend, before they had examined them. Others are perverted by a passion for novelty, and by the proud hope of raising a name on the ruin of ancient systems. Before we attach authority to another man's opinions, we should not merely ask, is he intelligent and profound? we should inquire, how was he educated? where has he lived?—and especially we should inquire, whether his reputation or interest be not in some degree connected with the sentiments he defends. And after all, how poorly can we judge of the degree of impartiality with which the mind of another has conducted its inquiries after truth.

But some will say, that they choose for their guides, not the learned, but the most *pious* class of christians, and that they can hardly err in the company of saints. But, my friends, let me ask you, who has constituted *you* the judges of other men's piety? Are the hearts of men so easily searched, are the marks of goodness so obvious and undoubted, are false professors of piety so

easily detected, that you feel no hesitation in deciding, to what denomination of christians the purest piety ought to be ascribed? For myself, I had much rather be the judge of doctrines than of characters. If you act upon the principle of making the most pious your spiritual guides, you will probably attach yourselves to those, who make the loudest professions of religion. But are you sure, that you will find among these the profoundest humility and the tenderest love of God and Jesus Christ? Do those who make the longest prayers always wear the purest hearts? Suppose that you had lived in Judea in the time of our Saviour, and had determined to take the most eminent saints as your spiritual directors, what guides would you probably have followed? There was at that time a class of men, whose reputation for sanctity rang through the land. They fasted often; they prayed often; they were solemn in their manners; they were too holy to commune with ordinary people; they would not suffer the Sabbath to be broken even by an act of mercy; not the minutest forms and expressions were overlooked; they were filled with indignation at the deficiencies of others; they were unsparing in their censures; even Jesus Christ was a glutton, wine-bibber, and sabbath-breaker, when compared with the rigid rules of their sect; and their ears were too much shocked with the impiety of his sentiments, to permit them to hear him. How naturally would you have been led to take for your guides men so imposing in their appearance, who

asserted so loudly their holy zeal, and of whom all around spoke in the language of veneration—and yet, what would these men have made of you? formal hypocrites, hard-hearted bigots, enemies of your Saviour. Under their guidance, you might have embued your hands in his blood, and then have lifted them to God with a confident hope of his approbation.

I am far from applying this character of the Pharisees to any class of Christians. Whilst every denomination has its hypocrites, there is no one, I trust, which, as a body, is marked by hypocrisy. I only mean to say, that loud pretensions and fair appearances are not always to be trusted; that popular opinion may invest with peculiar sanctity the very sect, which is most unsound in faith and practice. The purest piety is modest, unobtrusive, retiring. It is often concealed, or only discloses itself to the eye of friendship. It is not ambitious of controlling the opinions of the world, and puts in no claim to obedience from the multitude. How then shall we be sure that the class of christians, whom we may select as our guides, are the purest who bear the christian name?

Another objection may be made to the principle of choosing the pious as our spiritual directors. If we look round on the christian world with candid and inquiring minds, we shall see marks of the purest piety in every denomination. Every church will exhibit to us its saints. It is a delightful thought, that religion is confined to none of those enclosures

of sect and party, which are so often the limits of *our* narrow charity. As protestants, we shrink from the corruptions of the church of Rome. But what venerable sanctity has adorned many of its members? Who can pronounce the name of Fenelon without thinking better of human nature? Calvinism numbers among its disciples the fathers of New England, men of exalted piety, who breathed the spirit of the early martyrs. On the other hand, who can number the host of worthies, who have looked with a shuddering abhorrence on the doctrines of Calvin? Into what perplexities shall we be thrown, into what opposite paths shall we be attracted, if we choose to believe whatever the pious have believed?

Let us love and respect the good, but let us not lean upon them as if they could never fall into error. The best heart is not always guided by the most enlightened mind. Sometimes very conscientious men are weak and timid. They are alarmed by the denunciations of the positive, fear to inquire, and thus yield themselves slaves to gross superstitions. Sometimes very excellent men have more fancy than judgment. They delight in the marvellous, and find hidden meanings in the plainest language of scripture; they send their thoughts into the spiritual world, and mistake their vivid and pleasing dreams for divine communications. Where shall we not be led, what absurdity shall we not adopt, if every opinion is to be embraced which has found a place in the minds of the devout?

Christians, let us be humble; but let us remember, that he, who commands us to be humble, also commands us to call no man our master. Let us, according to our capacities, try by the scriptures what others teach as christian truth; and let us receive nothing, which we do not clearly see to accord with that unerring standard. Let not strong assertion pass with us for argument. By trusting implicitly to the judgment of others, we expose ourselves to inexpressible hazard. We shall probably fall into the worst hands. Men of true humility and of patient inquiry will tremble to take on themselves the responsible office of dictating to us the articles of our faith. The bold, self-sufficient, and domineering will offer themselves as our guides, and impose their crude and extravagant conceptions on our yielding credulity. It is to this timid dependence on the superior wisdom and sanctity of others, that we owe the extension and duration of some of those monstrous systems, which have borne the name of Christianity. The multitude were awed into submission; were taught to consider religion as something too awful and mysterious to be examined by their narrow faculties; were menaced with the flames and endless torments of hell, if they should dare to resist the authority of their guides; and in this prostration of understanding, they acquiesced in sentiments, which

common sense, could it have gained a hearing, would have rejected with instantaneous abhorrence and contempt.

I have extended my remarks on this head far beyond my original design. But I see at the present day so much of the false humility, which I have labored to expose, so much fear of man, so much submission of understanding to assertions and threats, that I cannot pass over this subject with indifference. I have witnessed extreme distress and alarm in very good people, because they have been unable to reconcile, with scripture or reason, certain doctrines, enforced upon them as essential to salvation by men, whose superior wisdom and sanctity they held it criminal to doubt. Great names are still employed to subdue and palsy the minds of christians. To the doubts of the sincere is opposed the authority of the holy and zealous of the present and past ages. A passive state of mind is thus induced. Those inquiries, which give vigor and activity to intellect, and which providence, by permitting diversity of opinion, designed to awaken, are put to rest. The traditions of the fathers are imposed on the children—and the errors, which have been consecrated in an age of darkness, become the inheritance of many succeeding generations.

[The subject will be continued in the next number.]

Rev. W. E. Channing.

EXTRACT FROM TENNANT'S INDIAN RECREATIONS.

[As the public attention has been called of late to Foreign Missions, we have thought, that an extract from Tennant's Indian recreations, giving an account of a Moravian Mission in the south of Africa, might not be unacceptable—and we offer it, as containing some useful reflections.]

“ON the banks of *Zonder-End* river, near *Bavian's Kloof*,* in Southern Africa, three Moravian missionaries have gradually attracted to their society a number of the wandering and destitute Hottentots of that district. As their conduct has been successful, in every difficult and almost hopeless case, it forms a rule for the guidance of future missionaries, among the most savage of the Oriental tribes: they began by supplying their corporeal, before their intellectual wants.

“By gradually accustoming them to cleanliness and industry, they have succeeded in changing the natural habits of the Hottentots so completely, that they have now not only a relish for dress, but are enabled to subsist and clothe themselves by the produce of their own labor. They are already acquainted with many of the duties, and aspire to the comforts of rational beings; an effect that probably never could have been produced by holding to them vague and temporary

* *Bavian's Kloof*, or *pass*, is seventy or eighty miles east from Cape Town, near the cape of Good Hope. It is situated inland on *Zouder* or *Fonder-End* river, a branch of *Breed's* river, which runs southeast into *St. Sebastian* or *St. Catharine's Bay*.

harangues on speculative tenets, before their minds were rendered capable of comprehending them, by a previous education.

“The comforts enjoyed by this little society, have, on various occasions, drawn to it such accessions from the destitute savages of that neighbourhood, as have greatly increased its original number. During the short period of the British government in that part of Africa, it had amounted to above six hundred souls; new proselytes were however so frequently added, that the missionaries had found it expedient to send to Europe for a farther supply of instructors.

“At the period when *Mr. Barrow* passed through this district, his attention was drawn to this society while assembled in the open field on Sunday, for the purpose of performing divine service. A scene so novel in this part of Africa, and so different from what he had been accustomed to observe among this unhappy class of beings, at once gratified his feelings, and excited a lively curiosity regarding the nature of an establishment which could produce such beneficial effects.

“The three missionaries, from whom we learnt the particulars of this society, belong to a sect of Moravians, termed *Hernhuters*, from the name of a village in Saxony, which had afforded them an asylum, when driven from Moravia. “They were plain and decent in their dress,” adds this traveller, “of modest manners, and intelligent in conversa-

tion." Although zealous in the cause of their mission, they were free from bigotry and enthusiasm.

"Around the different dwellings of these missionaries, and those of their flock also, every thing participated of that neatness and simplicity, which forms the strongest feature in their character: the church which they had built was a plain and neat edifice: their mill for grinding corn was superior to any in the whole colony: their gardens were also kept in good order, and produced abundance of vegetables for the supply of the table: almost every thing that had been done, was by the labor of their own hands; for, agreeably to the rules of the society of which they were members, each missionary had learned some useful profession. One was skilled in every branch of smith's work, the second was a school master, and the third a tailor.

"The six hundred proselytes, who had joined these teachers, were cantoned in a valley adjoining the river, and in huts, with a small portion of ground annexed to each, for the purpose of raising sustenance. The various stages of their improvement were still visible, and marked with exactness the length of time they had joined this community: the earliest converts were best clothed, cleanest, and most perfectly accommodated; a circumstance which afforded a pleasing demonstration that their improvement was gradual, and that the amelioration of their state was progressive, arising from a change both in their man-

ners and industry. The condition of the greater part had already become preferable to that of the poor in some parts of England.

"The circumstance, which seems chiefly to have enabled these missionaries to overcome the indolence and filthy habits that distinguish the savage life, is, their first endeavouring to accustom the Hottentots to bodily labor and cleanliness, before proposing to their minds any abstract doctrines or theological tenets.

"A method, the very reverse of this, has frustrated the labors of by far the greater part of European missionaries, in almost every part of Asia: in the case now under review, every individual Hottentot, who chose to learn a trade, was immediately paid for his labor, as soon as he could earn wages. Some, in consequence of this, hired themselves for a limited time to the neighbouring peasants; some made mats and brooms for sale; others reared poultry; and not a few supported themselves and their families by their cattle and sheep. The greater part of the society was, by these means, enabled to purchase decent clothing; and to appear at church dressed in printed cottons, instead of the filthy habiliments which had invariably distinguished that tribe in their natural state, and which had conferred upon them a sort of pre-eminence in wretchedness and loathsome barbarity.

"These various improvements, thus effected among this tribe of Hottentots, are not to be considered as precarious or transient in

their nature; for since they are gradual, and have proceeded upon rational principles, as well as a thorough conviction among the natives themselves of their utility, they have continued, and must continue in a state of gradual advancement. Every individual being at last fully persuaded that cleanliness is greatly conducive to his health and his comfort, he is willing to bestow any little money he can spare in purchasing clothes, instead of spirits and tobacco, which in his unreclaimed state, constituted the supreme objects of his desire, although they had occasioned the greater part of those evils and mischiefs which had embittered his condition.

“Such have been the effects of the judicious arrangements and instructions of the missionaries at Bavian’s Kloof. That enthusiasm and fanatical spirit, which has so often characterised the Moravian sectaries in Europe, having found no place in this society, their discourses are there short, and replete with good sense and useful advice; and so far are they from making any ostentatious display of a large list of new converts to their persuasion, that they have ever been remarkably cautious in conferring either the name or privileges of their new profession upon any of the proselytes at an unseasonable period.

“Not more than sixty, of ten times that number of converts, had, at the period alluded to, been admitted members of the christian church, by the initiatory rite of baptism. Their conduct, in this respect, has also been as differ-

ent from that of other missionaries in the East, as the consequences which have been the result of it. In that country it has been too common to publish at the different stations, and to transmit to Europe a pompous catalogue of converts to the christian church, not without strong suspicion of its magnitude being increased by the artifices of these converts themselves; the same persons presenting themselves at different places under feigned names.

“This successful example of the Moravians in Africa, which has thus been given in detail, on the authority of Mr. Barrow, is, in every particular, consistent with the personal knowledge of several English gentlemen, who were then upon the spot: But to such as are in any degree acquainted with the character of that writer, no additional testimony will be necessary to authenticate any fact, recorded in his volumes.

“As many important inferences are to be drawn from this conduct of the Moravians of Bavian’s Kloof, they ought not to rest on a solitary example; the same lesson may be drawn from a thousand instances, as will appear in the sequel.

“1. We have to infer from it, first, as a rule for the guidance of future missionaries, that they ought to learn the more useful of the *mechanical trades*. The primary lesson, which savage man seems capable of receiving, is to labor with his hands; this nature seems to have ordained, as an early provision against cold, hunger, and other urgent wants.

Even in the communicating of this instruction, the missionary must meet with many disappointments, and he ought to possess, along with mechanical skill, great patience, and much practical acquaintance with human character.

"2. As the individuals of foreign and independent tribes are free, and cannot be compelled to attend the instructions of their teachers, they can only be attached to them by motives of interest: every new lesson ought to be productive of some benefit: it ought either to convey a positive comfort, or remove some want. Hence the missionaries of rude and unreclaimed nations must be men of *active* and unwearied benevolence; they ought not, as heretofore, to be drawn from the haunts of the solitary and recluse; where the mind is too often soured by the acrimony of polemical doctrines, and where the students are generally unqualified by any acquaintance with those mechanical labors which must supply the primary wants of man.

"3. The missionaries must beware of magnifying the extent and importance of their own labors, by giving premature admission to their new converts into the rank and privileges of christianity. By a contrary method the natives will be too apt to disgrace its doctrines by the grossness of their conceptions, and will perhaps still oftener offend the purity of its precepts, by the immorality and extravagance of their conduct.

"4. The missionaries ought assiduously to apply to the in-

struction of the young; not merely in the elements of learning, as signifying the knowledge of letters, but in communicating habits of domestic industry and useful labor. For these purposes a course of discipline will be found more effectual than oral instruction.

"Fifthly, the missionary must 'shew his faith by his works.' His conduct must at all times prove an ornament, not a disgrace to his profession; for of all the human causes of the speedy diffusion of Christianity among the heathen nations, this has justly been regarded as the most powerful, namely, the upright and blameless life of its early professors.

"Should these rules of evangelizing rude nations be observed, and this mode of instruction, it will be attended with equally good effect among every savage people.

"For if the same happy fruits have not been reaped from missionary labors in India and among the other Oriental nations, it must be attributed to the neglect of these necessary means: it cannot assuredly be ascribed to any greater indocility in the natives, or to any superior difficulty of communicating instruction to the peaceable Hindoos. Notwithstanding the boasted permanency of their system, the great reformer, Nanuk, has converted the whole nation of the Seeks to a different faith.

"Our failure so often in these countries must have arisen from the adoption of a less judicious mode of instruction, from the promulgation of mysterious doctrines, previous to the communi-

education of knowledge sufficient either to appreciate their value or to comprehend their meaning.

"The same cause will, in a great measure, account for the small benefit or advantage which has hitherto been reaped from their new faith, by the converts themselves, whether in the knowledge of duty, or in the conduct of life. Neither the remnant of Portuguese christians in the East, nor the new proselytes to our faith from among the heathens, enjoy any superior reputation for integrity of conduct or respectability of character; nor are they in any respect more trust-worthy in the transaction of ordinary business. The Oriental convert, as we have hitherto seen his ed-

ucation conducted, on his admission into the church changes his name only; no additional information is conveyed to his understanding, nor any new motives afforded him for the practice of duty.

"In those circumstances, finding the ties of his former system, whatever they were, completely broken, a laxity of principle is to be apprehended, rather than a more rigid adherence to virtue. From such a conduct, on the part of the missionaries, and from such a plan of instruction, little benefit could be expected: yet the failure of it has occasioned this indolent and unphilosophical conclusion, that no effort of ours can improve the Oriental nations."

REVIEW.

I. *Observations on our Lord's conduct as a Divine Instructor: and on the excellence of his moral character. By William Newcome, D. D. Archbishop of Armagh.* Charlestown, Samuel Etheridge, jun. 1810. pp. 516, 8vo.

WE do not expect to fulfil all the duties, and therefore lay no claim to the name or the honors of professed reviewers. In this age, when the number of books is so greatly multiplied, there would be great use, no doubt, in a work which should give a full and impartial account of their merits and defects. Those, which are truly valuable, might, in this way, be sooner brought into extensive circulation; and neither the money nor time of readers would be thrown away upon those,

which are useless or bad. To perform this office well however requires a great deal of real learning, a very sound judgment, and no common share of christian candor. We have so often seen it done ill; reviews are so frequently made vehicles for disseminating personal and party animosities, prejudices, and jealousies; that we do not think, that we shall often trust ourselves to expose the demerits of those writers, with whose opinions we may not happen to agree. Our chief object will be, to give an account of the merits of such theological works, as fall in with the general design of the Christian Disciple, and whose circulation therefore we think it useful to attempt to promote. And,

We begin with a work of Arch-

bishop Newcome, and propose to endeavour to aid those of our readers, who may not have seen it, in forming a judgment of its value. Its great object is, to assist the christian inquirer, in studying the doctrines of our Saviour in their native simplicity, as they fell from his own lips—to bring together the various traits of his character, as they appear in the different incidents of his life, scattered through the narration of the evangelists—to illustrate those evidences of his divine mission to which he himself appealed—to discuss the chief difficulties relating to the phraseology and to the subject matter of the gospel history—and, in one word, to make all that is to be found in the gospels familiar to the understandings of every reader. We do not know how we can better convey an idea of the advantage and necessity of the studies, which this book is designed to illustrate, than by an extract from the author's preface:—

“A diligent attention to our Lord's discourses and actions has been highly satisfactory and delightful to me. The life of Jesus is a most instructive, a most interesting, and a most important subject. The Deity, when we contemplate his discoveries of himself in the works of creation, cannot be sufficiently admired and adored. But in the gospels we see him, as it were, face to face; we seem to converse with him, as a man with his friend; and we behold his perfections as vividly represented in the person of Jesus Christ, as the limited capacity of human nature admits.

“It is my earnest wish and prayer, that, by a more general cultivation of biblical criticism, the lovers of the scriptures may better understand and more deeply admire them; and that

those, who neglect a due examination of them, or who deny their authority, may be convinced of their importance, and may discover the signatures of truth stamp'd on them. My ardent love and admiration of these divine writings lead me to conclude, that they cannot be seriously and carefully read without pleasure and conviction. I lament, that they are impiously interdicted to a large body of Christians; that they are so much disregarded, and of course misunderstood, by the bulk of Protestants among ourselves; that many of our clergy, unmindful of the solemn engagement at their ordination, do not devote their time to the study of them; and that, while learning is making a rapid progress in its various branches, the religion of Christ is almost every where overwhelmed by human formularies and systems. Christianity can never have its free course among men of improved understandings, and even among rational creatures in general, while gross misrepresentations of it are substituted in the place of the simple and perfect original.” pp. vii, viii.

The work is divided into two parts: and the first into three chapters. The first chapter is devoted to the consideration of the *matter of our Lord's instructions*; and displays successively all that our Lord teaches of God the Father—of his own nature and office—of the Holy Spirit—of his own manifestation in the flesh and of the ends for which he died—of the life to come and the general condition of the gospel covenant, &c. &c. This is done by collecting under each head every representation, which our Lord gives us, relating to these most interesting topics, with references in the margin to the chapter and verse of the Evangelists, where they are found. The difficult passages, as they occur, are carefully illustrated

by a short paraphrase or commentary; and, when necessary, by a full discussion in the text or the notes.

The second chapter is occupied with considering the *manner, in which our Lord taught*. In this are given examples of the authority with which our Lord spake—of the restrictions which he sometimes gave to his precepts—of the reasons which he occasionally gave for them—of the beauties which occur in his discourses—of the occasions out of which his instructions frequently arose, and the familiar objects from which he drew his images, &c. &c. This chapter abounds in interesting and original remarks.

The third chapter contains the *proofs, which our Lord gave of his divine mission*, under the heads of his prophecies and his miracles. In the first section of this chapter there will be found, among other things, the most complete and best account, with which we are acquainted, of the fulfilment of the prophecy of the destruction of Jerusalem, with a minute narrative of the circumstances of the siege and destruction of this celebrated city.

The first chapter of the second part is devoted to the consideration of illustrations, which the example of our Lord has given, of the various virtues and graces of a perfect character. The remarks are arranged under the divisions of his piety, his benevolence, his compassion, his justice, his temperance, his meekness, his humility, &c. No one can attentively meditate on this picture without wonder, delight, and improvement. We shall

gratify our readers with an extract from the concluding section, which contains a recapitulation of his character.

“Never was a character at the same time so commanding and natural, so resplendent and pleasing, so amiable and venerable. There is peculiar contrast in it between an awful greatness, dignity, and majesty, and the most conciliating loveliness, tenderness, and softness. He now converses with prophets, lawgivers, and angels; and the next instant he meekly endures the dulness of his disciples, and the blasphemies and rage of the multitude. He now calls himself greater than Solomon, one who can command legions of angels, the Giver of life to whomsoever he pleaseth, the Son of God, who shall sit on his glorious throne to judge the world. At other times, we find him embracing young children, not lifting up his voice in the streets, not breaking the bruised reed, nor quenching the smoking flax; calling his disciples, not servants, but friends and brethren, and comforting them with an exuberant and parental affection. Let us pause an instant, and fill our minds with the idea of one who knew all things heavenly and earthly, searched and laid open the inmost recesses of the heart, rectified every prejudice and removed every mistake of a moral and religious kind, by a word exercised a sovereignty over all nature, penetrated the hidden events of futurity, gave promises of admission into a happy immortality, had the keys of life and death, claimed an union with the Father; and yet was pious, mild, gentle, humble, affable, social, benevolent, friendly, affectionate. Such a character is fairer than the morning star. Each separate virtue is made stronger by opposition and contrast; and the union of so many virtues forms a brightness which fitly represents the glory of that God ‘who inhabiteth light inaccessible.’

“Such a character must have been a real one. There is something so extraordinary, so perfect, and so god-like in it, that it could not have been thus supported throughout by the ut-

most stretch of human art, much less by men confessedly unlearned and obscure." pp. 484, 485.

The work is concluded by three short chapters on the testimony, which has been borne to our Lord's character by his enemies; on the manner in which the evangelists delineate his character; and proofs in his conduct that he was not an impostor.

We hope that the view of the design and the outline of the contents of this book, which we have thus given, will induce our readers to examine it for themselves. We can hardly name a work, which we think may be more profitably studied. We wish that it may find a place in every family library, and may be considered as part of at least the Sunday reading of every domestic circle. Of course we do not pledge ourselves for the perfect accuracy of every opinion of this or any oth-

er uninspired author; though we certainly think there are few writers on similar subjects, who may be read with more confidence in their fairness, learning, judgment, and piety. The reader will find nothing of the bitterness of controversy, and no attempts to strain the plain language of scripture to a conformity to preconceived metaphysical theories. If he study this book in the temper in which it is written, we feel confident, that he will find himself making advances both in charity and knowledge. The example and teachings of our Saviour can never be contemplated with attention, seriousness, and prayer, without producing a spirit of gentleness and meekness, of devotion and benevolence; without fitting us for the duties of life, and preparing us for the happiness of eternity.

Rev. S. L. Thatcher

ANECDOTES.

OF AN ITALIAN BISHOP.

THERE was an Italian Bishop, who had struggled through great difficulties without repining, and who met with much opposition in the discharge of his episcopal function, without ever betraying the least impatience. An intimate friend of his, who highly admired those virtues, which he thought it impossible to imitate, one day asked the prelate, if he could communicate the secret of being always easy. "Yes," replied the old man, "I can teach you my secret, and with great facility; it consists in nothing more than making a right use of my eyes." His friend beg-

ged him to explain himself. "Most willingly," returned the bishop. "In whatever state I am, I first of all *look up to heaven*, and remember that my principal business is to get there. I then *look down upon the earth*, and call to mind what a small space I shall occupy, when I come to be interred. I then *look abroad into the world*, and observe what multitudes are there, who are, in all respects, more unhappy than myself. Thus I learn where true happiness is placed; where all our cares must end; and how very little reason I have to repine or to complain."

OF ONE OF THE UNITED BRETHREN.

IN the last war in Germany, a captain of cavalry was ordered out on a foraging party. He put himself at the head of his troop, and marched to the quarter assigned him. It was a solitary valley, in which hardly any thing but woods could be seen. In the midst of it stood a little cottage; on perceiving it, he went up and knocked at the door; out comes an ancient Hernhuter (Moravian) with a beard silvered by age. "Father," says the officer, "shew me a field where I can set my troopers a-foraging."—"Presently," replied the Hernhuter. The old man walked before, and conducted them out of the valley. After a quarter of an hour's

march, they found a fine field of barley. "There is the very thing we want," says the captain.—"Have patience for a few minutes," replies his guide, "you shall be satisfied." They went on, and at the distance of about a quarter of a league farther, they arrived at another field of barley. The troopers immediately dismounted, cut down the grain, trussed it up, and remounted. The officer upon this, says to his conductor—"Father, you have given yourself and us unnecessary trouble, the first field was much better than this."—"Very true, Sir," replied the good old man, "but it was not mine."

POETRY.

DIVINE LOVE.

FROM POEMS BY THE REV. HENRY MOORE.

My God, thy boundless love I praise;
How bright on high its glories blaze!
How sweetly bloom below!
It streams from thine eternal throne!
Through heaven its joys forever run,
And o'er the earth they flow.

'Tis love that paints the purple morn,
And bids the clouds, in air upborne,
Their genial drops distil;
In every vernal beam it glows,
And breathes in every gale that blows,
And glides in every rill.

It robes in cheerful green the ground,
And pours its flowery beauties round,
Whose sweets perfume the gale;
Its bounties richly spread the plain,
The blushing fruit, the golden grain,
And smile in every vale.

But in thy gospel see it shine
With grace and glories more divine,
Proclaiming sins forgiven;
There faith, bright cherub, points the way
To realms of everlasting day,
And opens all her heaven.

Then let the love that makes me blest,
With cheerful praise inspire my breast,
And ardent gratitude;
And all my thoughts and passions tend
To thee, my father and my friend,
My soul's eternal good.

Dart from thine own celestial flame
One vivid beam to warm my frame
With kindred energy;
Mark thine own image on my mind,
And teach me to be good and kind,
And love and bless like thee.

RELIGIOUS INTELLIGENCE.

MASSACHUSETTS SOCIETY FOR THE SUPPRESSION OF
INTEMPERANCE.

A society with this designation has been recently established. Its object is "to suppress the too free use of ardent spirits, and its kindred vices, profaneness and gaming, and to encourage and promote temperance and general morality." With a view to this object, "the society recommend the institution of auxiliary societies in the different parts of the commonwealth."

"No person is eligible as a member, who is not of a fair moral reputation, nor shall any one be admitted as a member, unless nominated in open meeting and approved by the votes of

two thirds of the members present at the time. Any person, thus nominated and approved, may become a member by subscribing the constitution, or announcing his acceptance of his election and paying two dollars for the use of the society. All clergymen in the commonwealth are considered as members, on their giving notice of their desire of becoming such, or subscribing the constitution; and they are exempted from the payment of two dollars, as above provided respecting other members."

NOTICE.

ON Thursday, the 27th of May, inst. a sermon will be delivered in Brattle street church, at eleven o'clock, A.M. before the Convention of Congregational ministers, by the Rev. JOHN T. KIRKLAND, D. D. L. L. D. President of Harvard University. After sermon there will be a contribution for the relief of the poor widows of Congregational ministers.

Among the multiplicity of objects, which are continually soliciting the aid of the charitable, this, it is hoped, will not be deemed of inferior moment.

Owing to the small salaries of clergymen, particularly in country towns, many of their widows are left in circumstances peculiarly indigent. It is true, that they sometimes have connexions, who afford them all necessary aid; and some of them have the happiness to live in parishes, where they find friends, who act the same benev-

olent part. But it too commonly happens, that, at the death of a minister, the care of the society to provide for his family entirely ceases. To afford assistance to widows, under such circumstances, is well worthy the attention of the christian public, and of our Capital in particular, long renowned for deeds of munificence, the best evidences of "religion pure and undefiled."

That the liberally disposed may bestow their charities without fear of misapplication, it may be well to inform them, that every widow, who receives any portion of the contribution, is put on the list by express vote of the Convention; that twenty one were on this list the last year; and that whatever is contributed on the day of Convention, unless otherwise appropriated by the donors, goes to the immediate relief of these objects of charity.

Candidates for the Ministry in Boston and its vicinity.

Rev. Mr. Leonard, Boston.
Mr. William Popkin, Malden.
Mr. Samuel Sewall, Cambridge.
Mr. John L. Abbot, do.
Mr. John White, do.
Mr. Isaac Hard, Charlestown.

Mr. Francis Parkman, Boston.
Mr. Charles Eliot, do.
Mr. Joseph Field, jun. do.
Mr. Thomas B. Gannett, Cambridge.
Mr. Lemuel Capen, Dorchester.

✻ Several articles of Religious Intelligence, prepared for this number, are omitted for want of room.